

Social Work Progression Guidance

Halton Borough Council is committed to developing the careers of Social Workers. Progression is directly linked with continued professional development (CPD) and is linked to Halton Borough Council's (HBC) progression structure that rewards Social Workers for their knowledge, experience, potential and enthusiasm for social work in Halton. Structures of progression are underpinned by the [Professional Capabilities Framework](#) (PCF).

The purpose of this guidance is to explain the process for all Social Workers across Children's Social Care how to progress through the incremental salary scales.

Progression Stages

Level 1 – Newly Qualified Social Worker: SCP 24

Within Children's Services, Newly Qualified Social Worker (NQSW) is a defined status. All Newly Qualified Social Workers in Halton must successfully complete the [Assessed and Supported Year in Employment](#) (ASYE) to remain employed by Halton Borough Council. As part of this programme the NQSW is required to demonstrate their professional capability against the [ASYE* level descriptor of the Professional Capabilities Framework](#) (PCF) and [Knowledge and Skills Statements for Child and Family Social Work](#) (KSS).

On completion of the ASYE as a Newly Qualified Social Worker (NQSW), a Progression Panel will be arranged to explore the competence of the Social Worker in line with the ASYE framework.

A Social Worker's readiness to be considered for progression will be decided by their Principal Manager in conjunction with the Social Worker and their direct line manager through the completion of a Reflective Career Review (Appendix 2). This will be assessed by the Progression Panel against the relevant PCF level.

The Progression Panel will consist of the Social Worker's Divisional Manager, Principal Social Worker, University Representative (ASYE Panel only) and the Social Worker's Line Manager, both Practice Lead and Principal Manager.

If the Social Worker is able to evidence progress in line with the PCF as an Experienced Social Worker then a Reflective Career Review (Appendix 2) must be produced for this panel with management oversight and agreement. The Reflective Career Review will be assessed against the PCF.

This panel will suffice as both an agreement to pass the ASYE and a Progression Panel where appropriate.

If ASYE and Progression Panel have been successful the Social Worker will progress to Level 3 -Experienced Social Worker (SCP 28).

If successfully passed ASYE but it is felt by the Social Worker's Line Manager and Principal Manager that the Social Worker needs further time to consolidate their practice and knowledge in line with the PCF they will progress to Level 2 - Social Worker (SCP 25). This decision must be clearly stated and recorded at the panel whilst also being recorded in supervision with areas for development clearly identified. There may also be occasions where Social Workers reflect upon their practice experience and request to defer their progression to Experienced Social

Worker as they identify they would like to further consolidate their practice. The reasons for this request will be discussed in the panel and clearly recorded. Social Workers will be supported by their managers to help identify opportunities to gain the knowledge and skills required to progress to Experienced Social Worker.

Level 2 – Social Worker: SCP 25-27

For those Social Workers who have successfully completed their ASYE and have not completed Progression to Experienced Social Worker they will progress to SCP 25 and move through the banding to SCP 27.

A Social Worker's readiness to progress to Experienced Social Worker (SCP 28) will be decided by their Principal Manager in conjunction with the Social Worker and their direct line manager through the completion of a Reflective Career Review (Appendix 2). This will be assessed by the Progression Panel against the relevant PCF level. If progression is being requested more than 12 months post successful completion of ASYE a direct observation of the Social Worker's practice (Appendix 3) should be undertaken by their Line Manager and this must be submitted alongside their Reflective Career Review.

The Progression Panel will consist of the Social Worker's Divisional Manager, Principal Social Worker and the Social Worker Line Manager, both Practice Lead and Principal Manager.

If a Social Worker progression has not been presented to a Progression Panel after they have completed 3 years post qualifying experience then the matter should be referred to their Divisional Manager as this may highlight deficits in the Social Workers ability, knowledge and/or professional practice and may impede their ability to remain registered with Social Work England.

Level 3 – Experienced Social Worker: SCP 28-31

An Experienced Social Worker must demonstrate professional competencies in line with the relevant PCF level (Experienced Social Worker). It is expected that Social Workers practicing at the Experienced Social Worker level continue to demonstrate their commitment to Continued Professional Development and work with their line manager to identify areas of practice in which they wish to develop specialist skills and knowledge. This will be recorded in the workers supervision. In order to progress to Advanced Social Worker workers need to undertake further training including but not limited to Practice Educator Training (Stage 2 PEPS), ABE training, PAMS, Systemic Practice and ILM.

In order to move through the next progression stage, the Social Worker must complete the Progression Programme Record – Advanced Practitioner (Appendix 4). This document is an electronic record of work produced to provide evidence of the Social Worker's progression and development. This record will also be used to support line managers in completing the request for progression. The programme record will evidence Social Workers of competencies met against the Advanced Social Worker level of the PCF.

The Progression Panel will consist of the Social Worker's Divisional Manager, Principal Social Worker and the Social Worker's Line Manager, both Practice Lead and Principal Manager.

Level 4 – Advanced Social Worker: SCP 32-35

The Social Worker must be able to evidence continuous professional development and competencies set against the relevant PCF level descriptor with the Advanced Social Worker Job Description.

Evidence of specialisms such as ABE training, PAMS training, Practice Educator training, Systemic Practice, ILM, Systemic Family Social Worker and other professional competencies that have developed should be evident and shared with the wider workforce in order to demonstrate an advanced level of practice. It is expected that all workers who successfully attain the Stage 2 Practice Educator training support a minimum of one student social worker every 2 years in order to maintain currency of their Practice Educator qualification.

Notification to Human Resources

It is the responsibility of the Social Worker's Divisional Manager to inform HR of pay changes as a result of progression. An email must be sent to payandpensions@halton.gov.uk containing the appropriate information. In cases where the Divisional Manager is unable to do this the Operational Director will inform HR.

Appeals Process

If the Principal Manager disagrees with the Social Worker's request for progression the Social Worker can appeal in writing to the Divisional Manager, setting out the reasons for appeal as a means of resolution. The decision of the Divisional Manager is final.

Should the Social Worker disagree with the decision of the Progression Panel the Social Worker can appeal in writing to the Operational Director as a means of resolution. The decision of the Operational Director is final.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Career Progression Framework Essential Criteria Table

Appendix 2 – Reflective Career Review Pro forma

Appendix 3 – Direct Observation of Practice Pro forma

Appendix 4 – Progression Programme Record – Advanced Practitioner

VERSION CONTROL

Area of Document:	Updated By:	Date:
Social Work Progression Guidance produced to replace Social Work Progression Policy: Children and Families Service 2013	Practice Manager for Workforce Development / CYP Policy Officer	April 2018
Sections on Notification to Human Resources and Appeals Process added	CYP Policy Officer	May 2018
Updated scale points (SCPs) and refreshed PCF for Social Work England	Practice Manager for Workforce Development / CYP Policy Officer	January 2020
Updated guidance	Practice Manager for Workforce Development / CYP Policy Officer	February 2022

Career Progression Framework Essential Criteria	Role	PCF Level	Grade	SCP
<p>Social Work Degree.</p> <p>On completion of the ASYE as a Newly Qualified Social Worker (NQS), a panel will be arranged to explore the competence of the Social Worker in line with the ASYE framework.</p> <p>If the Social Worker is able to evidence progress in line with the KSS for Child and Family Social Work and PCF as an Experienced Social Worker a Reflective Career Review can be produced at this panel with management oversight and agreement.</p> <p>This panel will suffice as both an agreement to pass the ASYE and a progression panel where appropriate.</p> <p>ASYE pass will progress to SCP 25 and full progression pass will move to SCP 28.</p>	Assessed and Supported Year of Employment (ASYE)	ASYE	HBC 7	24 (£28,672)
<p>Progression panel for Experienced Social Worker can be requested when a Social Worker can demonstrate skills and knowledge alongside practice that meets the requirements of the Experienced Social Worker within the PCF as demonstrated through the completion of a Reflective Career Review.</p> <p>If progression is being requested more than 12 months post successful completion of ASYE a direct observation of the Social Worker's practice must be undertaken by their Line Manager and this must be submitted alongside their Reflective Career Review. In addition a case audit will be undertaken by the Principal Manager.</p>	Social Worker	Social Worker	HBC 7	25 (£29,577) 26 (£30,451) 27 (£31,346)
<p>In order to move through the next progression stage the Social Worker must complete the Progression Programme Record – Advanced Practitioner. This document is an electronic record of work produced to provide evidence of the Social Worker's progression and development against the Advanced Social Worker level of the PCF. Plus a case audit will be undertaken by the Principal Manager. In Addition the Social Worker needs to undertake further training including but not limited to Practice Educator Training (Stage 2 PEPS), ABE training, PAMS, Systemic Practice and ILM.</p>	Experienced Social Worker	Experienced Social Worker	HBC 8	28 (£32,234) 29 (£32,910) 30 (£33,782) 31 (£34,728)
<p>Evidence of continuous professional development and competencies set against the relevant PCF level descriptor in line with the Advanced social Worker Job Description.</p> <p>Evidence of specialisms such as ABE training, PAMS training, Practice Educator training, Systemic Practice, ILM and other professional competencies that have developed should be evident and shared with the wider workforce in order to demonstrate an advanced level of practice. It is expected that all workers who successfully attain the Stage 2 Practice Educator training support a minimum of one student social worker every 2 years in order to maintain currency of their Practice Educator qualification. In addition a case audit will be undertaken by the Principal Manager.</p>	Advanced Social Worker	Advanced Social Worker	HBC 9	32 (£35,745) 33 (£36,922) 34 (£37,890) 35 (£38,890)



REFLECTIVE CAREER REVIEW

Social Worker's Report for Panel: Progression to Experienced Social Worker

CANDIDATE	
DATE OF SOCIAL WORK QUALIFICATION	
PRINCIPAL MANAGER	
TEAM	
DATE OF PROGRESSION PANEL	

Reflective Career Review

Social workers at **experienced level** are skilled, effective practitioners acting with considerable autonomy. They are likely to have in depth knowledge and skill in one or more fields of practice which may have been developed through a formal post-qualifying training and development activity. They may undertake Practice Educator training and take student social workers. They may have a postgraduate qualification and role in specialised practice e.g. AMHP, BIA. They may have a largely autonomous role as sole or lead practitioners in a team or service. They have developed capability to integrate professional knowledge, the views of people using services and research/evaluation evidence routinely in their practice.

They demonstrate expert and effective practice in complex situations, assessing and managing higher levels of risk while promoting enablement and self-determination. They network and liaise with a wider range of professionals and other colleagues, including at more senior or strategic levels. They manage complex caseloads and offer expert opinion within the organisation and to others.

They undertake capacity-building with individuals, families, communities, user groups and voluntary organisations, and contribute their views on service provision to commissioners. They apply, promote and uphold the Code of Ethics and demonstrate to other their ongoing development in all domains of the PCF. They develop their capability to integrate professional knowledge, the perspectives of people using services and research/evaluation evidence in their practice.

They may undertake complex tasks such as chairing significant meetings, offering expert support and advice to case conferences, producing high quality and more specialised assessments and reports for a range of functions, undertaking local peer audits of quality. They model good

practice, setting expectations for others. They start to take responsibility and accountability for the practice of others e.g. mentoring newly qualified social workers and supervising the work of more junior staff.

Considering the [PCF descriptor for Experienced Social Workers](#) please provide an overview of your learning and experience to date that indicates you are practicing within this level of the PCF. Identify what you see as your future learning needs and what you see as your future career pathway. Finally tell the Panel members why you think they should agree for you to progress to Experienced Social Worker. *(Suggested word limit 1500 words)*

Large empty rectangular box for content.

	SIGNED	DATE
Social Worker		
Principal Manager		

DIRECT OBSERVATION OF PRACTICE – OBSERVATION ONE

SOCIAL WORKER	
OBSERVING MANAGER	
DATE OF OBSERVATION	

SECTION 1 – TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SOCIAL WORKER PRIOR TO THE OBSERVATION TAKING PLACE

Brief description of the intervention to be observed and the context in which the observation will take place
Planning for the observation: Please include preparation planning and specific objectives to be achieved
How was the service user prepared for the observation and how was their consent obtained?

SECTION 2 – TO BE COMPLETED BY THE OBSERVER

Service User Feedback: To be completed by observing manager directly following the observation

	Comments
Did the social worker give you information about the observation before it took place? (Note: Are you confident the service user fully understands their participation in the observation and understands they are free to withdraw at any time?)	
Did the social worker ask for your consent?	
Did you feel able to participate in the situation being observed?	
Is there anything the social worker did well?	

Is there anything the social worker could have done better?	
Do you have any other comments to make?	

OBSERVER ASSESSMENT

Brief Assessment of the observation including whether the Social Worker met their specified objectives?
Did you observe any areas of good practice?
Which PCF domains have been demonstrated? Please provide information to support your assessment of the direct observation; reference can be made to the nine domains where relevant but you are not required to make a comment against each domain. You can identify strengths and areas for development.

SECTION 3 – SOCIAL WORKER TO COMPLETE FOLLOWING THE OBSERVATION

Critical reflection and professional development: Complete after you have read the manager's feedback.

	Signed	Date
Social Worker		
Manager		



Borough Council

Progression Programme Record – Advanced Practitioner

Name of Social Worker:

20

This document is an electronic record of work produced to provide evidence of your progression and development. All associated documents must be presented in this format with the aim of storing information that's easily accessible and in one place. The record will also be used to support line managers in completing the request for progression.

SOCIAL WORKER DETAILS

Candidate	
Date of Social Work Qualification	
Date IPP (or Equivalent) Completed	
Principal Manager	
Team	
Date of Progression Panel	

RECORD CONTENTS

Record of CPD Activity	✓ Information relating to attendance on training and application to practice, learning and development opportunities
Direct Observation of Practice	✓ Direct Observation 1
Record of Case Audit	✓ Case Audit completed by line manager
Social Workers Critical Career Review	✓ Self-Reflection against PCF Advanced Practitioner Level
Line Manager's Supporting Statement	✓ Completed and signed. Manager to use supporting programme evidence, as above to support recommendation for progression

RECORD OF CPD ACTIVITY

This template can be used to record details of continuing professional development and training activities and should contain evidence of relevant training completed post IPP. It should also include details of Learning Sets, Tutorials, Study Days, Practice Development Workshops, Big Social Work Conversation, multi-agency staff briefings etc. Where staff have undertaken Practice Educator, ABE or PAMs training, details should be provided of when this training has been utilised in practice – for example details of any student placements supported, dates for ABE interviews conducted.

Date	Activity	Learning Outcome



DIRECT OBSERVATION OF PRACTICE – OBSERVATION ONE

Social Worker	
Observing Manager	
Date of Observation	

SECTION 1 – TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SOCIAL WORKER PRIOR TO THE OBSERVATION TAKING PLACE

Brief description of the intervention to be observed and the context in which the observation will take place
Planning for the observation: Please include preparation planning and specific objectives to be achieved
How was the service user prepared for the observation and how was their consent obtained?

SECTION 2 – TO BE COMPLETED BY THE OBSERVER

Service User Feedback: To be completed by observing manager directly following the observation

	Comments
Did the social worker give you information about the observation before it took place? (Note: Are you confident the service user fully understands their participation in the observation and understands they are free to withdraw at any time?)	
Did the social worker ask for your consent?	
Did you feel able to participate in the situation being observed?	
Is there anything the social worker did well?	

Is there anything the social worker could have done better?	
Do you have any other comments to make?	

OBSERVER ASSESSMENT

Brief Assessment of the observation including whether the Social Worker met their specified objectives?
Did you observe any areas of good practice?
Which PCF domains have been demonstrated? Please provide information to support your assessment of the direct observation; reference can be made to the nine domains where relevant but you are not required to make a comment against each domain. You can identify strengths and areas for development.

SECTION 3 – SOCIAL WORKER TO COMPLETE FOLLOWING THE OBSERVATION

Critical reflection and professional development: Complete after you have read the manager’s feedback.

Signed		Date
Social Worker		
Manager		

CASE AUDIT

Please attach completed Case Audit

SOCIAL WORKERS CRITICAL CAREER REVIEW

Critical Career Review

Advanced social workers are highly skilled in their field of social work, are routinely involved in supervision or oversight of others and/or highly specialised practice and/or learning and development. They ensure the integration of professional knowledge, the perspectives of people using services and research/evaluation evidence routinely in their practice and promote this with others.

Advanced Social Work Practitioners: practice with a specified user group and are recognised for their expertise and excellence, providing leadership, supervision, evidence and professional wisdom to colleagues and other professionals. They often work in situations of very high complexity. They provide constructive challenge to others at all levels in the organisation to enhance practice, procedures and policies, promote innovation and evidence-informed practice, and introduce improved ways of working into their work settings (e.g. knowledge transfer from other sites of excellence). They contribute to knowledge in their field of practice, and make use of sophisticated, critical reasoning. They both model and facilitate reflective practice and the learning of others.

Considering the [PCF descriptor for Advanced Social Work Practitioners](#) please provide an overview of your learning and experience to date that indicates you are ready to progress to Advanced Practitioner. Identify what you see as your future learning needs and what you see as your future career pathway. Finally tell the Panel members why you think they should agree for you to progress Advanced Practitioner. *(Suggested word limit 1500 words)*



Principal Manager’s Supporting Statement

To be completed by the Principal Manager:

Social Worker’s Name	
Team	
Employee Number	
Work Address	

Principal Manager’s Name	
Work Address	

SECTION 1: THE PROFESSIONAL CAPABILITIES FRAMEWORK

<p>Using the Professional Capabilities Framework (PCF) at the appropriate level as reference please give information to support progression. Please refer to the Advanced Social Worker Level Capabilities for stage 3 progression (Appendix 3). Information should Be given for all nine domains of the PCF.</p>
<p>Domain 1: Professionalism - Identify and Behave as a professional social worker, committed to professional development</p>
<p>Domain 2: Values & Ethics - Apply social work ethical principles and values to guide professional practice</p>
<p>Domain 3: Diversity and Equality - Recognise diversity and apply anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive principles in practice</p>
<p>Domain 4: Rights, Justice & Economic Wellbeing - Advance human rights and promote social justice and economic well-Being</p>

Domain 5: Knowledge - Develop and apply relevant knowledge from social work practice and research, social sciences, law, other professional and relevant fields, and from the experience of people who use services
Domain 6: Critical Reflection & Analysis - Apply critical reflection and analysis to inform and provide a rationale for professional decision-making
Domain 7: Intervention & Skills - Use judgement, knowledge and authority to intervene with individuals, families and communities to promote independence, provide support, prevent harm and enable progress
Domain 8: Contexts & Organisations - Engage with, inform, and adapt to changing organisational contexts, and the social and policy environments that shape practice. Operate effectively within and contribute to the development of organisations and services, including multi-agency and inter-professional settings
Domain 9: Professional Leadership - Promote the profession and good social work practice. Take responsibility for the professional learning and development of others. Develop personal influence and be part of the collective leadership and impact of the profession.

SECTION 2: DIRECT OBSERVATION OF PRACTICE (INCLUDING SERVICE USER INVOLVEMENT & FEEDBACK)

(Please ensure completed copies of the direct observation forms are contained within the progression record)

Dates of Observation:

I confirm the social worker has achieved the required level of capability to progress:	
Signed: Principal Manager	

Please forward the completed form and copies of the direct observations to the relevant Divisional Manager for approval, placing copies on the social worker's supervision file